

CHAPTER- II.

PURUSOTTAMA'S LIFE.

(I)

Geneology.

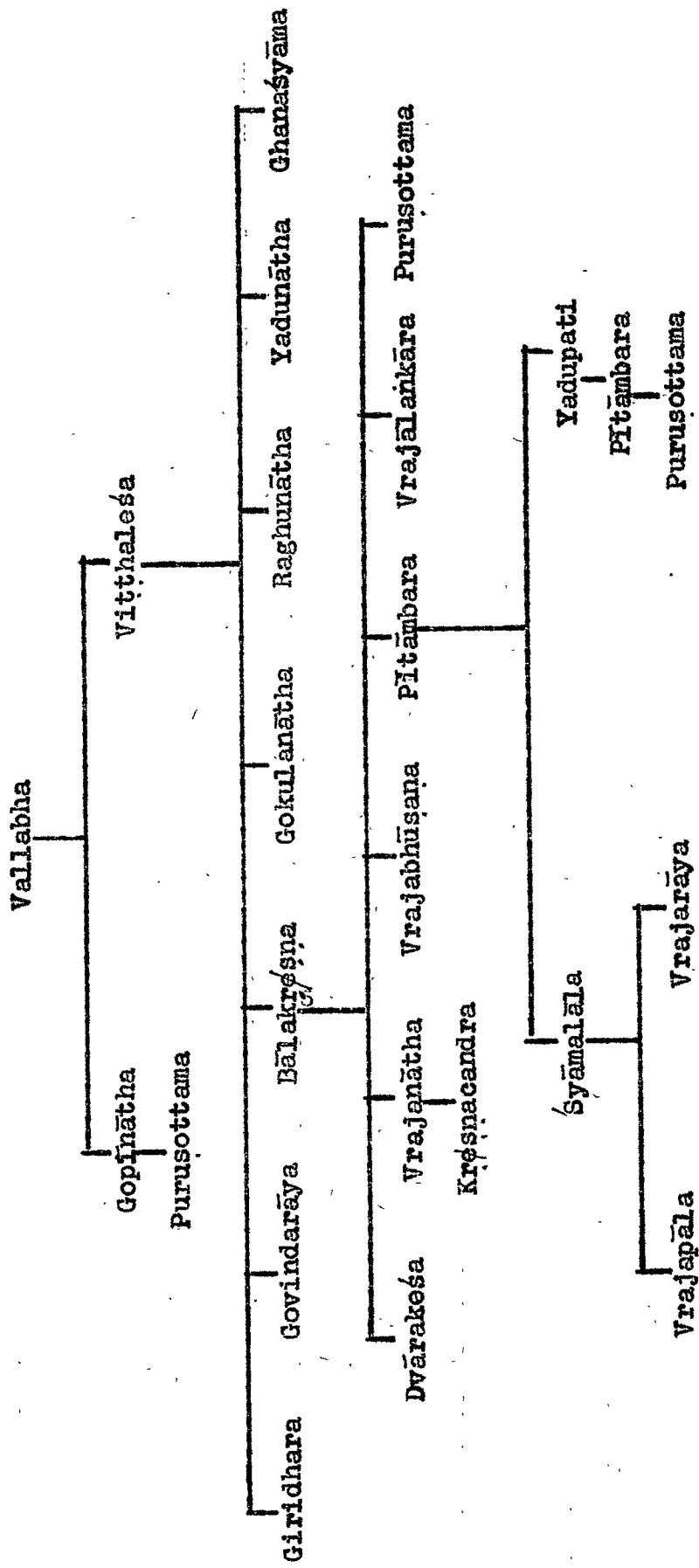
Unlike the founders of other systems, Vallabha was a householder. He became a sannyāsi in Benaras only in his last days. Not only so but in his small work 'Sannyāsa-nirṇaya', he revealed his thoughts on asceticism as such. As a result of this, while in other systems we have the line of teachers and their disciples who adored the pontifical chairs, here we have the line of direct descendants. These descendants have done much to propound and explain the Sāmpradāyic theories and practices. Vallabha's system has given us three orders of scholars, the Vaiṣṇavas who were followers of the School, the Bhaṭṭas who were related to the Gosvāmīs by matrimonial alliance, and the direct descendants of Vallabha. Out of these, the last have served the system most. They had the right of service of the images that they kept in their own possession. Many of them were great scholars. Again they were looked upon with very high regard by their followers, perhaps because they were direct descendants of Vallabha.

The title 'Gosvāmi' which was assumed by them and which is retained by them even to-day, does not appear to be the original title of Vallabha himself. Vallabha calls himself just 'Dīkṣita'. Even Viṭṭhaleśa calls himself 'Dīkṣita' in some of his works. Viṭṭhaleśa however, was allowed to graze his cattle at Gokula, Mathura etc. by the imperial firmans issued by the Moghul Emperors-Akber and Jehangir. It was an account of this that Viṭṭhaleśa was called a Go-svāmi-'the owner of cows' and this title went on for centuries. Even to-day the Mahārājas are called Gosvāmis.

Viṭṭhaleśa had 7 sons. The third son was Bālakṛṣṇa, who again had 6 sons. His second son was Vrajanātha while the fourth son was named Pītāmbara. Vrajanātha had a son named Kṛṣṇacandra. Pītāmbara has two sons 'Śyāmalāla' and 'Yadupati'. Śyāmalāla was the father of Vrajapāla and Vrajarāya. Yadupati's son was Pītāmbara whose son was Puruṣottama. Puruṣottama refers respectfully to his father and his grand-father in his works.¹ We do not know the name of Puruṣottama's mother. The geneology is given on the next page.

1. Bhaktyā naumi pītāmbaram^{ak} Yadupatim^{ak} tātām ca Pītāmbaram.

Genealogy



(II).

Date and place of Birth.

The generally accepted year of Puruṣottama's birth is V.S.1724. Shri.Chimanlal Shastri of Bada Mandir at Surat however told me that this did not appear to be correct. I, therefore wrote to Pandit Kanthamani Shastri of Kenkroli, who directed me to write to Shri.Nrisimhalalji Pandya of Nathadvar, who supplied me with the horoscope of Puruṣottama. He has informed me that his ancestors were appointed Jyotisis and family-priests of Gosvāmi Viṭṭhala-nātha and he has got a thousand such old horoscopes. We would like to suggest that apart from the astrological importance, if these horoscopes are published, they will be very helpful in finding out the exact dates of many of the Gosvāmis, and thus in tracing the history of the family of Vallabha. Puruṣottama's horoscope is given in the appendix No.1. On the strength of that horoscope, we can be definite that Puruṣottama was born on the 10th day of the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada in V.S.1714, corresponding to A.D.1658.

We do not know definitely where he was born. It is quite likely that he was born in Gokula, as tradition relates.

(III).
The Temple at Surat.

We do not know anything about Puruṣottama until he came to Surat and settled in the temple of Bālakṛṣṇa as an heir of Vrajarāya. We may here note the history of the image of Bālakṛṣṇa till it was installed in Surat by Vrajarāya.

The image of Bālakṛṣṇa owes its origin to the sacred river Yamunā. Once when Vallabha went to the river for a bath, the image came out entangled in the sacred thread worn by him, and told Vallabha that it would come to his house. Vallabha welcomed the Lord and taking the image to his house, placed it together with other images in the Sevā. There is another tradition also stating that the image came from the Karnakūpa in Vraja. At that time Vallabha had five images and he was spending his time in their devotion at Adel near Prayag.

A curious incident has also been recorded in connection with this idol. Vallabha's son Viṭṭhaleśa was just a child at that time. He also served the small image of Bālakṛṣṇa, he decorated it, played with it, served it with the Bhoga and did all sorts of things. Once he served

'Thora' (ठोरा) as the Bhoga. To his surprise he found that the image began to eat it. Viṭṭhaleśa thought that if the Thora ^{was} eaten by him in this way, nothing ^{would} remain for him. He then tried to take it away from the image but Bālakṛṣṇa also pulled it in another direction. In the mean time Vallabha came there and was delighted to see this friendship. He asked Viṭṭhaleśa to give away the Thora to the idol and another dish of thora was prepared for Viṭṭhaleśa himself.

This image of Bālakṛṣṇa remained with Vallabha at Aḍaī, Kāshī and Gokula. After Vallabha, it came to Viṭṭhaleśa. Viṭṭhaleśa had seven images in all and also had seven sons. So he distributed these images to his sons thus:

<u>Name of the son.</u>	<u>Name of the image.</u>
(1) Giridhara	Mathureśa.
(2) Govindamāya	Viṭṭhalanātha.
(3) Bālakṛṣṇa	Dvārakādhiśa.
(4) Gokulanātha	Gokulanātha.
(5) Raghunātha	Gokulacandramā.
(6) Yadunātha	Bālakṛṣṇa.
(7) Ghenaśyāma	Madanamohana.

It will be seen that the image of Bālakṛṣṇa thus came in the possession of Yadunātha, the sixth son of Viṭṭhaleśa. Yadunātha kept this image together with that of Dvārakādhiśa, and stayed with Bālakṛṣṇa, the third son of Viṭṭhaleśa. We do not know why Yadunātha took such a steps. One of the possible reasons may be that the image of Bālakṛṣṇa is very small. After Yadunātha his son Madhusūdana also stayed with Dvārakeśa, the son of Bālakṛṣṇa. After sometime however Madhusūdana wanted to be independent of Dvārakeśa and hence he demanded the image of Bālakṛṣṇa from the latter. Dvārakeśa however was not inclined to comply with that demand. The matter was referred to Gokulanātha, the fourth son of Viṭṭhaleśa. Gokulanātha told Dvārakeśa that the image of Bālakṛṣṇa belonged in fact to Yadunātha who stayed with his father only due to affection. Again Viṭṭhaleśa himself had ordered that whenever Yadunātha or any of his descendants desired to serve the image independently, that desire should be fulfilled. Madhusūdana could thus get this image of Bālakṛṣṇa. After one year's service, the Lord wished to remain in the company of another image of Dvārakādhiśa. Madhusūdana thereupon brought it to

~~At~~ Dvārakeśa who accepted the image on the condition that Madhusūdana should not demand it in future. Madhusūdana agreed to this in writing. Thus the images of Dvārakādhīśa and Bālakṛṣṇa were kept in Gokula together. After Dvārakeśa, they were served by his son Giridhara. Giridhara's son Dvārakānātha possessed the images after his father. He served them together with his sister Gaṅgābetījī and his wife Jānakīvahuji. Dvārakānātha went to Kashi for study and managed to get the Sarasvatīmantra on his tongue. He became a profound scholar and then returned to his father at Gokula. But the same night, the God Dvārakādhīśa informed him that he had committed the ²²fault of 'Anyāśraya' by resorting to the Sarasvatīmantra and therefore he was no longer fit for devotion. He had to leave his house. Similar such incidents is also reported in connection with his father Giridhara. His wife Jānakī therefore with the help of Gaṅgā adopted Vrajabhūṣana, son of Śrīvallabha, in the year 1717.V.S. On the eighth day of the bright half of Bhādrapada.

This deed of adoption was challenged by Vrajarāya, son of Śyāmalāla, who recently returned to Gokula from Kashi. He demanded one of the two images served by the

trio of Gaṅgā, Jānakī and Vrajabhūṣaṇa. The demand of Vrajarāya was refused. He thereupon approached the Emperor but without any result. He then went to Gokula with ~~both~~ some associates and took away both the images by force. The matter was referred to the Emperor Aurangzeb, who ordered that the images should be returned to Vrajabhūṣaṇa. Vrajarāya again met the Emperor in a forest and pleased him. He reiterated his demand in the form of a request. The Emperor however did not agree. Vrajarāya then asked for only one image, that of Bālakṛṣṇa as a right. The Emperor accepted the request and issued the necessary order. With this order in hand, Vrajarāya came to Gokula, but Gaṅgā and Jānakī together with Vrajabhūṣaṇa went to Agra. When Vrajarāya went to Agra, they left the place for Ahmedabad, taking away with them both the images. They stayed there in an underground room and served the images secretly. Vrajarāya came to Ahmedabad and began his search for the images. After four months he could find out where the images were kept. Once he found that thousands of betel leaves were daily purchased from one shop. He thereupon asked the shop-keeper who informed him that those betel leaves were purchased for the images, that were kept secretly in a house in the

Raipur locality. Vrajarāya took the help of the Moghul Viceroy in Ahmedabad and went to that place. At that time both the images were lying in a cradle, and Gaṅgā, Jānakī and Vrajabhūṣaṇa were serving them. Vrajarāya showed to them the imperial order and took away the smaller image of Bālakṛṣṇa with his own hand from the cradle. Jānakī was very angry at this and cursed Vrajarāya to the effect that as he was taking away the image from the cradle, there would be no cradle in his house. Vrajarāya accepted the curse and left Ahmedabad.

From Ahmedabad Vrajarāya came to Surat. On account of his scholarship and his devotion to the Lord, he could exercise very good influence on the local Vaiṣṇavas. He settled in Surat and built a temple of his own in V.S. 1727. As he had no son, he adopted Puruṣottama as his heir. Puruṣottama thus occupied the pontifical chair of Surat after Vrajarāya.

The account given above is according to the tradition current in the Sampradāya. It seems to have a fairly large degree of historical truth. There is another tradition current in the Sampradāya, explaining how Puruṣottama could secure the image of Bālakṛṣṇa. It

is said that Puruṣottama took away this image from Gokula and brought it to Surat, hiding it in the locks of his hair. On account of this the Mahārāja in Gokula cursed Puruṣottama with childlessness. This tradition does not appear to be correct. That Puruṣottama could secure the image of Bālakṛṣṇa from Vrajarāya, is borne out by the statement of Puruṣottama himself. In the introductory verses in his Ānubhāṣyaprakāśa, Puruṣottama pays homage to Vrajarāya and says:

Vande tam Vrajarājam anvayamaṇim yadrociṣā mādrśo-
 Pyāsin mūrdhni kṛpāparaḥ Prabhuveṣḥ Śrībālakṛṣṇaḥ svayam.²

The historicity of the feud between Vrajarāya on the one hand and Gaṅgā, Jānakī and Vrajabhūṣaṇa on the other is corroborated by documentary evidence also. In the Sudder Diwani Adaulat Case No. 43, was produced a release executed by Gaṅgā, Jānakī, and Vrajabhūṣaṇa to Vrajarāya. The document which is given in appendix No. 2, bears the date third day of the bright half of the first Āśvina, V.S. 1737, corresponding to 1681 A.D. It is stated in the document that they had settled their old dispute regarding

2. A.B.P. Intro. V. 7. p. 2.

the two images and the Pādukā of the Ācārya. The idol of Bālakṛṣṇa should be given up to Vrajarāya, while that of Dvārakānātha should be kept by them. Gaṅgā should keep the Pādukā till her death and after that the Pādukā would devolve to Vrajarāya. It was stated in conclusion that no cause of dispute remained between the parties after this. The document was signed by Harirāya, son of Kalyāṇarāya and others as witnesses.

It appears from the document that the quarrel between Vrajarāya on the one hand and Gaṅgā, Jānakī, and Vrajabhūṣaṇa on the other went on for a long time. Harirāya, who was a famous personality living at that time in the Saṃpradāya, seems to have used his good offices to work out a compromise solution.

One important point should however be noted in this connection. The year, given in the document is V.S.1737. The traditional account given above informs us that Vrajarāya came to Surat after receiving the idol of Bālakṛṣṇa in V.S.1727. In the Gujarat Sarvasaṅgraha prepared by Kavi Narmadashankar, it is stated that the temple of Bālakṛṣṇa at Kanpith was built in 1695 A.D.³

3. Gujarat Sarvasaṅgraha p.531.

In the History of Kankroli, Pandit Kanthamani Shastri expresses certain doubts about the authenticity of this document on the following grounds:-

(1) The script of the document is Gujarati; and it is quite possible also but as Gaṅgābetījī herself used Hindi (Vraj) in all her dealings, the language of the document should have been Hindi(Vraj) and not Gujarati.

(2) Ten years before the date of this document all of them left Gujarat and settled in Mewad.

(3) Gaṅgābetījī was not alive in V.S.1737.

(4) When all of them were in Ahmedabad, in V.S.1727, there is no evidence to show that Harirāya also stayed in Gujarat.

On these grounds, Kanthamani Shastri says that the document is doubtful. It is likely that Vrajarāya might have settled firmly in Surat by about V.S. 1737 and might have got this document prepared so as to avoid any problem in future.⁴

Shri.Chimenlal Shastri of the Bada Mandir at Surat is writing a history of the idol of Bālakṛṣṇa and the

4. Kankroli.Part.II.appendix No.2.pp.154-155.

Bada Mandir, Surat. The work is not yet published. Shri. C. H.

Shastri informed me of his arguments which are as follows:-

(1) The correct year in the document should be V.S. 1727 and not 1737. According to mathematical consideration the additional month of Āśvina is found in V.S. 1726-27. He also supplied me with a table showing the additional months. The relevant portion of the table is given below:-

Samvat Year: beginning with Kārtika.	Samvat year : beginning with Caitra.	Śaka year.	Additional month.
1723	1724	1589	
1724	1725	1590	Jyestha.
1725-	1726	1591	
1726	1727	1582	Āśvina.
1727	1728	1593	
1728	1729	1594	
1729	1730	1595	Śrāvana.
1730	1731	1596	
1731	1732	1597	
1732	1733	1598	Jyestha.
1733	1734	1599	
1734	1735	1600	
1735	1736	1601	Vaiśākha

Samvat Year: beginning with Kārtika.	Samvat year : beginning with Caitra.	Śaka year :	Additional month.
1736	1737	1602	
1737	1738	1603	Bhādrapada.
1738	1739	1604	
1739	1740	1605	
1740	1741	1606	Āṣāḍha.

(2) The document was produced before the court in the Sudder Diwani Adaulat case No.43.

(3) Harirāya had mastery over Gujarati language, as can be seen from the Padas, he composed in Gujarati. It is likely that as the writer of the said document was a Gujarati, Harirāya might have got it written in Gujarati, and Gaṅgābetījī and others signed it.

(4) Gaṅgābetījī died in V.S.1736. Hence the date of the document cannot be V.S.1737. Aurangzeb attacked Mathura in V.S.1726 and so the trio of Gaṅgābetījī, Jānakīvahuji and Vrajabhūṣaṇa could not stay in Gokula. In V.S.1727, Harirāya was about 80 years of age. Śrī Nāthajī was shifted from Girirāja to Mewad in V.S.1728 and that is why the Pātotsava of Śrī Nāthajī was celebrated in Mewad in V.S.1728. There is

a possibility that Harirāya lived in Gujarat in V.S.1726-27, because Mathura was not peaceful and the residen^{ce} in Mewad was not yet established. In the letters that Harirāya wrote to his younger brother Copeśvara, there are references to Surat and to one Gujarati gentleman named Premaji. Harirāya visited Gujarat very often. The news of the death of Copeśvara's wife was known to him when he was in Gujarat.

It appears from all this, that the idol of Bālakṛṣṇa was brought to Surat in V.S.1727. As regards the date given in Gujarat Sarvasangraha, it can be understood as the year in which the temple was built completely.

We do not know when Puruṣottama came to Surat. Any way he did not come to Surat before V.S.1727. We also do not know when Vrajarāya died and when Puruṣottama succeeded him. After Puruṣottama, the image was given to another Puruṣottama, son of Muralīdhara and great Grandson of Vrajālakṣmī. This Puruṣottama had a son called Govardhana. As he died without any male issue, his wife Mahārānī vahujī adopted Gokulotsava, who belonged to the family of the ^{Second} ~~first~~ son of Viṭṭhaleśa. Thus the image went to the possession of the ^{Second} ~~first~~ house. On the next page we have shown how the image of Bālakṛṣṇa has changed hands, by means of a chart.

Chart showing how the idol of Balakṛṣṇa changed hands.

1. Vallabha.

I

2. Viṭṭhaleśa.

I

3. Yadunātha. (Sixth son of Viṭṭhaleśa).

I

4. Bālakṛṣṇa. (Third son of Viṭṭhaleśa).

I

5. Dvārakeśa (Son of Bālakṛṣṇa).

I

6. Madhusūdana (Son of Yadunātha).

I

7. Dvārakeśa. (Same as No. 5).

I

8. Giridhara. (Son of Dvārakeśa).

I

9. Dvārakānātha (Son of Giridhara).

I

10. Gaṅgā (Sister of Dvārakānātha), Jānakī (Wife of Dvārakānātha),
Vrajabhūṣaṇa (Son of 'Srī Vallabha).

I

11. Vrajarāya (Son of Śyāmalāla).

I

12. Puruṣottama (Son of Pītāmbara).

I

13. Puruṣottama (Son of Muralīdhara).

I

14. Govardhaneśa (Son of Puruṣottama, No. 13).

I

15. Mahārāṇīvahuji (Wife of Govardhaneśa).

I

16. Gokulotsava (Adopted by Mahārāṇīvahuji).

(IV).
Study and Scholarship.

We do not know much about the childhood of Puruṣottama. His teacher was Kṛṣṇacandra, whose date of birth is probably V.S.1661. He was the son of Vrajanātha, the second son of Bālakṛṣṇa, the third son of Viṭṭhaleśa. He was a very great scholar. Nirbhayarāma Bhaṭṭa in his Kalpavṛkṣa calls him 'Śāstravittama'⁵ We do not know much about the life of this Kṛṣṇacandra. The Dhāvaparakāśikāvṛtti is ascribed to him. Puruṣottama pays homage to him as his preceptor in the beginning of his Anubhāṣyaprakāśa.⁶ Shri Telivala thinks that very probably Puruṣottama owes much to Kṛṣṇacandra for the profound scholarship, which is revealed in his works. Telivala says that Puruṣottama is obliged by two Gosvāmīs, Vrajarāya and Kṛṣṇacandra. A comparison of the works of Vrajarāya with those of Puruṣottama would show that there is

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5. *Evam Śrī Bālakṛṣṇānām jyeṣṭhasyaṇvaya īritah,
 Vrajanāthābhīdhasyātha dvitīyatanayasye tu ;
 Kṛṣṇacandra iti khyāto nandanah śāstravittamah.* Kalpavṛkṣa.
 quoted by Telivala in Venunāda Vol.I.No.5.
6. *Tatputrēn saha sūnubhir nijagurūn śrīkṛṣṇacandrāhvayēn....*
 A.B.P.Intro.V.7.p.2.

a basic difference in their respective methods of presentation. Naturally the profound scholarship of Puruṣottama does not owe its origin to the genius of Vrajarāya. It is likely that it may be due to the teaching of Kṛṣṇacandra. The argument of Telivala appears convincing, but the term Guru may mean only the initiating preceptor and nothing more. Telivala also refers to the Bhāvaṇīprakāśikāvṛtti and compares it with the Anubhāsyaprakāśa. The Bhāvaṇīprakāśikāvṛtti is a very suspicious work and we will discuss its relation with the Anubhāsyaprakāśa in the next chapter. It is difficult to say anything for or against the view of Telivala that the scholarship of Puruṣottama owes its origin to the teaching of Kṛṣṇacandra.

There is one curious tradition in the Sampradāya, which tries to account for the scholarship of Puruṣottama. It is said that when Puruṣottama was only seven years old, one great Pandit (Appaya Dīksita according to the Sampradāya) came to Surat and challenged the scholars for the Śāstrārtha. As the elderly persons in the Surat temple were absent, Puruṣottama's mother accepted the challenge and said that

her son would be prepared for the Śāstrārtha after three days. Puruṣottama then went to the underground room in the Surat temple and continuously muttered the Sarvottama-stotra for three days and nights. (According to some he muttered the Trividhanāmāvalī.) At the end of this the Lord Bālakṛṣṇa, Vallabhācārya and Viṭṭhalanāthajī presented themselves before him and blessed him with a thorough understanding of all the works, if he saw just the beginning and the end of the same. When Puruṣottama pays homage to Bālakṛṣṇa in the Anubhāsyaprakāśa he says:

Kṛīḍan Śrībālakṛṣṇaḥ paramakarūṇayā manmanah prerayātvā
Bhāṣyārtham yo' tigūḍham prakāṣitam akarot sampradāye-
-nivṛtte...?

The verse is taken as a proof for the tradition by some. After the blessings that he received, Puruṣottama received the blessing from his mother also. He was thus fully prepared for the Śāstrārtha and defeated the Pandita in Surat.

Whatever may be the value of the traditional story, Puruṣottama's scholarship is really profound. He had a thorough study of all the Bhāṣyas. He refers to almost all of them at the end of the Sūtras or Adhikaranas in

his Anubhāṣyaprakāśa. He knows of six Bhāṣyas, of Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, Śaiva, Bhāskara, Madhva, and Bhikṣu. At one place when Vallabha refers to someone by 'Kaścit paraśabdena dehādīn āha', Puruṣottama says in his comments, 'Idam ca na prasiddhaśadbhāṣyastham... Ata idānīm utsannasyaiva Kasyacin matasyollekhaḥ'.⁸ It may appear rather curious that Puruṣottama does not refer to Nimbārka at all, not only so, but even does not appear to know of him.

He also refers to Vācaspati, Jayatīrtha, and Vedāntadeśika, the famous followers of Śaṅkara, Madhva, and Rāmānuja respectively. Regarding the literature of his own school, his study is so very deep that he points out where and what exactly Viṭṭhaleśa added to the bulk of his father's works. Even in minor commentaries, such as those on the sixteenth tracts, he shows a thorough study of the interpretations given by the elders of the school, like Devakīnandana, Harirāya, Cācā Gopīśa, Dvārakeśa, etc. Apart from the Vedāntic works, he reveals a profound study of the authoritative works of other systems also. He refers to the Bhāṭṭas, the Prābhākaras, Kapila, Īśvara-kṛṣṇa, Gautama, Kaṇāda, Udayana, Pārthasārathimīśra, Maithili Bhavedeva Mīśra, Vanamālīdēsa, the Bauddhas,

the Jainas, Madhusūdana Sarasvati, Appaya Dīkṣita and many others very often. He also refers to Pāṇini, Patañjali, and Bhaṭṭojī Dīkṣita, and even Rāmakṛṣṇa, the author of Siddhāntaratnākara. He shows his study of rhetorics and refers to Kāvyaṭīkā, Dhvanyāloka and similar standard works on the subject. He refers even to Arkaṭīkā, a work on medicine and discusses how the Cinīyāpots are manufactured. His study of the Dharmaśāstra-nibandhas is simply astonishing as can be seen by the scores of references to such works in the Dravyasūddhi and Utsavaprakāśa. He is thoroughly well-versed in the sacred lore. His passages beam with the references to the Śrutis, the great Epics, Smṛtis and Purāṇas. From the classical literature, he refers to Prabodhacandrodaya. He also refers to Narasimha Mehta the famous Gujarati poet-saint. The above is not an exhaustive list of the works referred to by him, but it would be sufficient to show how great a scholar Puruṣottama was. There is a traditional verse in the Saṃpradāya, showing that he was a very great scholar and composed about nine lacs of verses. The verse runs:

Nāśīd ena samah samastanigamasmrtyēditattvārthavid

Vaktā cāpratimāḥ sadāḥsu viduṣāṃ adyāpi bhūmau budhaḥ,

Yah sarvam navalakṣapadyakamitapraudhaprabandham vyadhāt
 Sa Śrīmān Puruṣottama vijayatām Ācāryacudāmaṇih.

Puruṣottama was not only a great scholar himself, but he also kept so many other scholars with him. Puruṣottama does not appear to have been a man of very narrow outlook. Whenever he found a Pandit, irrespective of the system which that particular Pandit followed, Puruṣottama treated him with due respect. It is perhaps because of this that Puruṣottama is very exact in his references to other systems. ~~and~~

(V)

Travels and Digvijaya.

Puruṣottama is said to have travelled all over India. He went to various provinces and challenged all the great Pandits of the time for the Śāstrārtha. This is the reason why he was given the title of Daśadigantavijayī. It is said that he won over many of them and received written statements of his victory from them. My efforts to secure those statements have not been fruitful. If they are found out, it may be possible to trace the account of his travels.

He is also said to have gone to Dumas very often.

Dumas is a place of resort on the Sea-shore, about ten miles from Surat. It is said that Puruṣottama wrote many of his works there. Prof. M. G. Shastri goes still further and says that after finishing the daily work in the morning and serving the Lord Bālakṛṣṇa with Kājabhoga, Puruṣottama went to Dumas every day. He stayed there for the whole day and returned in the evening to serve the Lord Bālakṛṣṇa again. When he went to Dumas, he kept with him cartloads of Books. It is impossible to believe that Puruṣottama went there every day in those days when the means of communication and transport were not speedy.

Shri. Telivala in his account of Puruṣottama's life says that Puruṣottama used to go to Dumas very often. Many of his works were written and copied there. Telivala further says that Puruṣottama gave some sort of a letter to a Brahmin Devotee of his at Dumas and the descendants of that devotee are still alive.

Though I have not been able to get any definite information regarding this, I could get some hints from Dumas, which I visited often in connection with this purpose. There is a temple of Ranchhodji, built in December 1956.

The image however is old by centuries. It is made of black-stone and is similar to that of Dvāarakādhiśa at Dakor with the order, Padma, Cakra, Gadā and Śaṅkha. Below this image certain letters are inscribed. The first line could be read with difficulty. It reads:

महाशक्ति श्री य श्रीसूत्र

The second line could not be read because it is below the pīṭha, upon which the image is fixed. There are five other copper images and also a conch. All of them appear to be very old.

Shri. Chhaganlal Delpatram Upadhyay, Popularly known as Chhaganlal Shastri, offers his service to the image. He stays just near the temple. When approached, he readily showed his eagerness to give me as much information as he could. He informed me about some hearsay in Dumas that one Gosvāmi Mahārāja, who was perhaps a very great scholar, used to come to Dumas before some two hundred and fifty years or so. As regards the image of Ranchhodji he told me that it was quite possible that some one might have brought it in a ship in the Dark days of Hinduism. His family was in possession of this image since centuries, and he was not in a position to inform me when and how exactly his ancestors came to

possessed this image. It ^{is} difficult to make out exactly what is meant by the letters which are inscribed under the image. According to Shri. Upadhyay 'Śrī Sūtra' means that the image is of Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa. 'Mahāraula' can not be understood by us. It may perhaps signify that the image is from Rajasthan or Kutch. The image does not appear to owe its origin to South Gujarat. Shri. Upadhyay further informed me that in the Talav Falia, where his ancestors were staying at first, there was a fairly large number of Nagar Banias living in Dumas in that street. The Nagar Banias are generally Vaiṣṇavas belonging to the Puṣṭimārga. Thus there appears to have been some sort of Vaiṣṇavite influence of the Puṣṭimārga, exercised on the natives of Dumas. It is very likely that the said influence might have come from Surat which is the nearest centre of the Puṣṭimārga. Shri. Upadhyay also informed me that his ancestors possessed many Sanskrit manuscripts but unfortunately they could not be preserved. He showed to me one old manuscript of the Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki. The manuscript is now deposited in the manuscript-library of the Chunilal Gandhi Vidyabhavan, Surat. As the manuscript is important for our purpose, I have given a

short description and the colophons of the manuscript in appendix No.4. The following points should be noted in this connection:-

(1) The manuscript was copied in V.S.1786.Puruṣottama who was born in V.S.1714,lived a fairly long life and inspite of his gift deed in V.S.1781,we can say that he lived even after that time.The question will be discussed later in this chapter,but there is nothing wrong in assuming that Puruṣottama was living in V.S.1786.

(2) The handwriting found in the folios of the Kāṇḍa VI,were seen by Shri.Chimanlal Shastri,Secretary of the Bālakṛṣṇa Śuddhādvaita Mahāsamāhā,Surat.He told me that -there are manuscripts in the Surat temple,with a similar handwriting and it is very likely that the scribe might be one and the same.

(3) That the manuscript has been found at Dumas leads us to^a fairly reasonable conjecture that it might have been copied at Dumas. Had it been copied elsewhere,it is not likely that the ancestors of Shri.Upadhyay might have possessed it.

(4) In the very beginning of the Kāṇḍa I we have 'Om namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya' which precedes the salutation

to Rāma. It is really curious in a manuscript of Rāmāyana. In the beginning of the Kāṇḍa V we have one verse:

Jitam Bhagavatā tena Hariṇā lokadhārīṇā,

Ajane viśvarūpeṇa nirguṇeṇa guṇātmanā.

This verse is followed by the usual Maṅgala, 'Jayati Raghuvanśtilakah...'. The verse shows the contradictory attributes of the Lord. That Brahman has contradictory attributes is advocated by Vallabha alone and by no other Ācārya. What is the use of this additional verse in the manuscript of Rāmāyana? Both these points show that the owner as well as the scribe must have been definitely a follower of the Śuddhādvaita.

Thus it is clear that Puruṣottama was present in Dumas when the manuscript was copied out, and it is very likely that he shew it, if he did not own it. He might have given it to his followers in Dumas and perhaps some one ancestor of Shri. Upadhyay might have got it. It is also likely that Puruṣottama might have had some connection with the image of Ranchhodji, but about this we do not know anything.

(VI).

Private Life .

We do not know much about the private life of Puruṣottama. He had three wives, Rānī, Candrāvalī, and Padmāvatī. He had two sons, Yādupati and Dāmodara and one daughter named Haripriyā. Yādupati was born in V.S. 1749, and Dāmodara in V.S. 1760. Both of them died during his life time. Tradition runs that as Puruṣottama brought the image of Bālakṛṣṇa concealing it in the locks of his hair, the Gosvāmi Mahārāja of Kank that place became very angry and cursed him with childlessness. Hence even though Puruṣottama had two sons, both of them died very young.

Puruṣottama seems to have passed most of his time in the composition of his works. Many of his works were written in Dumas. In Surat, it is said that he used to ~~write~~ write in an underground room in the Surat temple. He kept about nine scribes with him. He dictated to them whatever he thought at a particular time. Thus some three or four works were being written simultaneously. This perhaps is the reason why there are mutual references found in many of his works, as Shri. Telivala thinks. It is said that he used to prepare three copies of all his works. One was kept for himself,

while the other two were sent to other Gosvāmis. He had cordial relations with Gosvāmi Viṭṭhalarāya Campasenivāla and one of the copies was sent to him. Whenever he went out, he kept with him cartloads of books rather than clothes or ornaments and things of luxury. Teliwāla says that he kept some about 32 carts. Puruṣottama again had a very big library of his own. He used to study the works of Vallabha and Viṭṭhaleśa very often and used to copy out those works in small handwriting. Telivāla saw one such manuscript of the Subodhinī on the first ten Adhyāyas of the tenth Skandha of the Bhāgavata. He found it very clear and the handwriting was quite good. Puruṣottama was a very good scribe himself. Śrī.Telivāla who saw many of his manuscripts while preparing critical editions of his works, says: " From his manuscripts we find him putting a point where we use ~~the~~ a comma; for a full stop he makes one stroke, and for a complete idea he makes two perpendicular strokes. When he wants to begin a fresh paragraph, he puts two perpendicular strokes and leaving a space of about half an inch he puts another two strokes and then begins a fresh paragraph. Important words are coloured with red senna. Śrī.Puruṣottamsjī has revised his manuscripts

atleast three or four times. Where he thought that an addition was necessary he would affix a fine slip and re-write over it. Where the angle mark was above the line, we had to look for the addition on the top of the page on the margin, counting the number of lines mentioned at the end of the addition. Where the angle was below the line we had similarly to look for the addition at the bottom of the page." ⁹

It appears that Puruṣottama was always busy writing something. This perhaps is the reason of his being called 'Lekhavālā'. Another title given by the contemporary Gosvāmīs to him was 'Vedapaśu'. It was a jeer at him.

Puruṣottama led a very simple life, even though like other Gosvāmīs he was blessed with vast fortune. He was staying in Surat, which was at the height of its glory as the chief emporium of trade on the Western coast of India. It was a main centre of business not only in Gujarat but in the whole of India and it attracted the famous Chhatrapati Shivaji for plunder. Puruṣottama was untouched by the pomp and glory of the city. He was an author and scholar, and liked to remain a real author and real scholar.

9. Telivela, quoted by M.C. Parekh in 'Shri. Vallabhacharya..!


We do not know much about him as a devotee, as much as we know about Herirāya. He is however said to have been a very good artist. His Holiness Gosvami Shri Vrajaratnalalji Maharaj of the Surat temple obliged me by showing certain articles, which are kept in the Sevā and which contain one picture, said to have been painted by Puruṣottama and five paper-cuts said to have been prepared by Puruṣottama. A short description of them is as follows:-

(1) The picture is of Muralīmanohara. It has three colours. Lord Kṛṣṇa ^{is} painted as playing upon his flute. There are two female deer at his feet. Above the head are painted the peacock-feathers. The picture is painted on the basis of the verse 'Dhanyas te mūdhamataye ...etc.' ¹⁰ In the verse the Gopikās describe the female deer which are at the feet of the Lord, hearing his Venunāda with rapt attention and worshipping him with loving glances. The idea in the verse is aptly revealed in the picture.

(2) Paper-cut of a Palm-tree, with two men ascending the tree with pots. Below at the root of the tree are designed one cow and one pot. There is a border design also.

10. Bhāgavata Purāṇa X.21.31.

The cutting is very minute and exact. The leaves of the tree, the helmets of two men, and all the details are quite clearly visible. The paper used is white.

(3) Paper-cut of four rams with one face. The four rams are shown as  and the one face which is designed can be fitted to any of them in different postures. There is also a border design. The paper-work is minute and the design is artistic and beautiful. The paper used is white.

(4) Paper-cut of a Seru tree with an artistic border. Below the tree are shown four birds, two on either side. The paper work is minutely executed. White paper is used.

(5) Paper-cut of a leafless dried up tree. The work is done with fineness. The paper is not white but has the dark colour corresponding to that of the trunk and branches of the tree.

(6) Paper-cut of a Kadamba tree. Two apes are shown in the work. One is mounting the tree, while the other is plucking the leaves. The work is so minutely designed that even the tail of the monkey can be seen easily.

The tree is fairly big.

Under the Saru tree and the Kadamba tree, the words 'Śrī' and 'Śrīh' are written respectively in ink. Gosvami Shri Vrajaratanalalji Maharaj told me that the handwriting was of Puruṣottama, and that this is a proof for the paper-work being done by Puruṣottama himself. He also informed me that according to requirements of the tradition of their family, if 'Śrī' is not written on the paper, it can not be included in the Sevā. Any way, it should be stated that the designs are fairly well preserved.¹¹

(VII)

Contemporaries.

By the time of Puruṣottama, the family of Vallabha became a very big family and his descendants spread over almost the whole of Western India. Thus Puruṣottama had many contemporary Gosvāmis.

11. Besides what has been described above, there are two copies of the picture of Viṭṭhaleśa, said to have been drawn by himself. There is also a picture of Śrīnāthajī.

In it are seen Govindarāya and others. There are also four manuscripts, ^{two} in the handwriting of Vallabha and two in that of Viṭṭhaleśa.

The most important and famous of the contemporary Gosvāmis, was Harirāya, who was born in V.S. 1649 and who lived a fairly long life of about one hundred and twenty years or so. It is said that he was alive in V.S. 1772. He was thus a senior contemporary of Puruṣottama. Regarding the connection of Harirāya with Puruṣottama, two stories have been preserved by tradition; both of them are intended to establish the superiority of Harirāya to Puruṣottama, as a devotee and as scholar. Both of them are narrated below.

Since the time of Viṭṭhaleśa, there is a convention in the Sampradāya that, whatever wealth is accumulated by a Gosvāmi in the first round of his travels, should be dedicated to Govardhananāthajī. Accordingly, Puruṣottama travelled all over India and with all his wealth went for dedicating it to Śrīnāthajī. It was the summer season, and as a rule shoes can not be presented to the Lord. But Puruṣottama brought with him very costly foot-wear studded with pearls. Looking to this, the Gosvāmi of that place allowed Puruṣottama to present the same to Śrīnāthajī for the limited time of Rājabhoga only. The young Gosvāmi

Puruṣottama wanted that the shoes should be kept for the whole day and attempted to do so by giving bribes to the chief servant of the temple. He did not think that this would be trouble some to God. Harirāya, at that time was staying at Khimnor, not very far from Nāthadvar. Śrīnāthajī informed him about this. Harirāya immediately came to Nāthadvar on horse-back and ordered that the shoes be taken off. The story thus shows that Harirāya was fortunately enough to obtain the grace of God, who informed him of what He thought and felt, while Puruṣottama was not blessed with similar favour.

Another story runs that once when Puruṣottama was dictating to a scribe his Prakāśa commentary on the Subodhinī, he had doubts about the exact significance of some particular point. Even though he pondered over it for a long time, his doubts could not be resolved. One old lady saw him in a sorry mood and on inquiry could know the reason. She said that she had heard the explanation of that particular point from Harirāya and she was prepared to explain the same to Puruṣottama. Puruṣottama thereupon asked for the explanation and on hearing the same he was satisfied. This story suggests

that Puruṣottama had to take the help of even an ordinary lady who just heard from Harirāya.

Both these stories are current among the followers of Harirāya. We do not know if there is any historical truth in either of them. So far as Puruṣottama is concerned he shows the same respect to Harirāya as he shows to others.

Another Gosvāmi with whom Puruṣottama seems to have had special relationship, was Viṭṭhalarāya of Capaseni. He was born in V.S. 1751 and was thus much junior to Puruṣottama. It is said that Puruṣottama sent one copy of all his works to him. He actually commented upon his own Prahasṭavāda at his request.¹²

Another Gosvāmi, with whom Puruṣottama seems to have had cordial relations was Śrīvallabha, the author of 'Lekha' on Subodhinī. Puruṣottama refers to him in his Subodhinīprakāśa on Bhāgavata X. iv. 20 by: 'Yathānevamyida ity atra. Vedanam wit. Bhāve kvip ... ity artha iti

12. Kṛtavan etām Prahasṭatīkāṁ Viṭṭhalarāyapramodāya.

'Śrīvallabhah. Tan mamāpi sammatam iti'. The singular in 'Śrīvallabhah' as against the plural used in the references to other Gosvāmis, would show that Śrīvallabhah was junior to Puruṣottama. Śrīvallabha's father was Viṭṭhalarāya. He was born on the dark eleventh of the month of Kārttika in V.S. 1729.

Shri. H. O. Shastri could get from Vaisnava Manilal of Jamnagar a list of Gosvāmis, who were contemporaries of Puruṣottama. The list is very long and does not appear to be conclusive. We have given below the same with certain subtractions:

<u>Name.</u>	<u>Place.</u>	<u>Samvat Year.</u>
1. Gopīkādhīśa	--	1699
2. Bālakṛṣṇa	Gokulā.	1700
3. Kṛṣṇa	Gokulā.	1700
4. Mādhavarāya	Shergadh.	1700
5. Viṭṭhalasā	Kenkroli	1700
6. Vrajevallabha	Gokulā.	1701
7. Śrīkēnta (Son of Cācā Gopīśa)	--	1701
8. Bēnsīdhara	Kashi	1702
9. Kākāvallabha	Nathadvar	1703
10. Rāmanalal (Son of Cācā Gopīśa)	---	1704

<u>Name</u>	<u>Place.</u>	<u>Samvat Year.</u>
11. Gokulamāni	Shergadh	1705
12. Kalyāṇarāya	Shergadh	1706
13. Ranachoda (Son of Viṭṭhalanātha)	Burhanpur	1707
14. Gokulalakāra	Gokula	1707
15. Vrajarāya	Surat	1707
16. Dvārakeśa	--	1708
17. Dvārakānātha	---	1708
18. Harirāya (Son of Vrajeśvara)	Gokula	1709
19. Bāburāya	Jamanagar	1711
20. Dāmodara	Nathadvar	1711
21. Raghunātha	----	1711
22. Raghunātha	-----	1715
23. Viṭṭhalanātha	Shergadh	1715
24. Gopīnātha	Gokula	1717
25. Viṭṭhaleśa	Shergadh	1718
26. Kalyāṇarāya	Shrijidvar	1718
27. Muralīdhara	Kankroli	1718
28. Śrīgopāla	---	1719
29. Ghanaśyāma	---	1720
30. Vrajabhūṣaṇa	Kankroli	1720
31. Vrajālakāra	Gokula	1721

<u>Name.</u>	<u>Place.</u>	<u>Samvat Year.</u>
32. B alakṛṣṇa	Kankroli	1721
33. Mohana	Shrijidvar	1722
34. Dvārakānātha	Shrijidvar	1722
35. Giridhara	Gokula	1725
36. Gopāla	Kankroli	1725
37. Gopīnātha	Shrijidvar	1725
38. Bālakṛṣṇa	Gokula	1725
39. Jayadeva	---	1725

(His descendants began the Jayagopāla sub-sect)

40. Raghunātha	Kota	1727
41. Mathurānātha.	Nagarthattha.	1728
42. Giridhara.	Shrijidvar	1728
43. Gokulacandranā.	----	1728
44. Giridhara.	Kota	1728
45. Govardhaneśa.	Jamnagar.	1729
46. Jīvanlāl	Bundikota	1729
47. Muralīdhara.	Kashi	1731
48. Kṛṣṇacandra.	Gokula	1732
49. Dvārakānātha.	Gutch-mandvi.	1734
50. Govardhaneśa.	Shrijidvar	1735
51. Gokularāya.	Gokula	1736
52. Giridhara.	Kashi	1737

<u>Name.</u>	<u>Place.</u>	<u>Samvat Year.</u>
53. Vrajaratna.	Gokula.	1737
54. Gopīnātha	Shrijidvar	1737
55. Puruṣottama (Son of Muralīdhara)	---	1738
56. Vraja-pāla	Kashi	1739.
57. Vrajanātha	Shrijidvar	1740.
58. Viṭṭhalanātha	Amreli	1741
59. Mohana	Kashi	1742
60. Venkateśa	Gokul	1742
61. Dvārakānātha	Gokul	1742
62. Viṭṭhalanātha	Shrijidvar	1743
63. Vrajanātha	---	1744
64. Muralīdhara	Shrijidvar	1744
65. Giridhara	Dhandhuka	1745
66. Gopīnātha	Kota	1745
67. Gokulādhiśa	Gokul	1745
68. Muralīdhara	---	1747
69. Vrajabharanēdīksita	Gokul	1747
70. Viṭṭhalarāya	Shrijidvar	1747
71. Jagannātha	Shrijidver	1747
72. Yadupati (Son of Puruṣottama)	Suret	1749
73. Śrīvatsa	Capaseni	1749

<u>Name.</u>	<u>Place.</u>	<u>Samvat Year.</u>
74. Mādhavarāya	Gokul	1749
75. Gokulanātha	Giriraj	1750
76. Dānirāya	Shrijidvar	1750
77. Viṭṭhalarāya	Capaseni	1751
78. Puruṣottama	Shrijidvar	1752
79. Gopāla	Kota	1755
80. Yadunātha	Shrijidvar	1756
81. Vrajaramana	Jaipur	1757
82. Jīvanalāl	Shrijidvar	1758
83. Vrajādhīśa	Jodhpur	1760
84. Dāmodara	Surat	1760
(Son of Puruṣottama)		
85. Dāmodara	Shrijidvar.	1761
86. Gokulacendra	Shrijidvar.	1762
87. Raghunātha	---	1762
88. Pradyumna	Shergadh	1762
89. Goverdhana	Shrijidvar	1763
90. Vrajabhūṣana	Nagerthattha.	1765
91. Gopendra	Gokul	1769
92. Rāmakṛṣṇa	Gokul	1770
93. Jagannātha	Kashi	1771
94. Kalyāṇarāya	Shrijidvar	1771

<u>Name.</u>	<u>Place.</u>	<u>Samvat Year.</u>
95. Kalyāṇarāya	Gokul	1772
96. Lakṣmaṇa	Gokul	1774
97. Ghaṇaśyāma	Shrijidvar	1774
98. Madhusūdana	Shergadh	1775
99. Bālakṛṣṇa	----	1775
100. Mathurānātha	Shrijidvar	1775
101. Jīvanalāl	Kashi	1775
102. Bālakṛṣṇa	Nathadvar	1777
103. Vrajananda	Shergadh	1778
104. Bālakṛṣṇa	-----	1778
105. Nṛsiṃhalāl	Gokul	1778
106. Gīmanlāl	----	1779
107. Rājīvalocana	----	1779
108. Gokulanātha	Kota	1780
109. Gopāla	Porbunder	1781
110. Govindarāya	Shrijidvar	1781
111. Viṭṭhalanātha	Girirajā	1781
112. Śrīvallabha	Kankroli	1781
113. Govindarāya	Kota	1782

The original list, as I have already stated is sufficiently long and runs upto V.S.1799. This much however is sufficient for us to show how big the family of Gosvāmis was at the time of Puruṣottama.

Coming to the scholars who did not belong to the Vallabha-Sampradāya, we find that a host of scholars and authors flourished in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries. The famous authors on Dharmaśāstra like Kamalākara Bhaṭṭa, Mitramiśra and Vaidya-nātha Pāyagunda alias Bālam Bhaṭṭa flourished at about the same time. Similarly Dinakara Bhaṭṭa and his son Gāgā Bhaṭṭa were also famous contemporaries of Puruṣottama. Both of them were proteges of Chatrapati Shivaji and it is said that Gāgā-Bhaṭṭa was actually called upon to officiate at the coronation of Shivaji in 1674 A.D. Bhaṭṭojī Dīkṣita, Nāgeśa and Konda-Bhaṭṭa were great grammarians. Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa, Gopīnātha Mauni, Annam Bhaṭṭa, Laugākṣi Bāhaskara, and many other writers on Nyāya and great scholars like Paṇḍitarāja Jagannātha also lived in these centuries. In fact many of them were all-round scholars and contributed to almost all the branches of knowledge. Thus the age in which Puruṣottama lived was an age of activity, Though one may perhaps feel that many of the works written at that time were more of the nature of commentaries and compilations, rather than original independent works. New theories were propounded only through the medium of commentaries and compilations. It was thus not the creative but the interpretative period in the history of Indian thought.

It has been maintained according to the tradition of

the Puṣṭimārga, that Puruṣottama had direct contact with Appayya-Dīkṣita. It is said that Puruṣottama had ^{saṅgā} ~~Saṅgā~~ with Appayya-Dīkṣita, when he was only seven years old. Dīkṣita was a prolific writer and wrote some about hundred works. His father was Raṅgarāja and his grand-father, (according to some his great grand-father) was Vakṣaṣthalācārya. The gretest question however that has baffled scholars, is his date. The generally accepted dates of his life are from 1554 A.D. to 1626 A.D.

Shri. Mahalinga Shastri who is a descendant of Appayya himself, gives his dates as 1520 A.D to 1593 A.D. MM. Dr. P. V. Kane has ably discussed the question in his History of Sanskrit Poetics.¹³ Shri. H. O. Shastri in his Hindi Biography of Puruṣottama¹⁴ has tried to show that Appayya was a contemporary of Puruṣottama. He says that in 1657 A.D. there was a meeting of scholars in Kashi in the Mukatimandapa and the decision was arrived at there to the effect that the Pañcadrāvida Brahmins could sit in the same line with the Devarṣi Brahmins of Maharashtra at dinner. The decision was signed by scholars like Khaṇḍadeva Miśra, and others who were present in that meeting. One of the signatories was Appayya Dīkṣita. The Nirṇaya-petra has been published in the 'Citale Bhaṭṭa Prakaraṇa' of Pimpurkar. Thus

13. Sāhityadarpaṇa .Intro. pp. 307-309.

14. Avatāravādēvalī. Hindi Intro. pp. 12-13.

Appayya Dīkṣita was present in Kashi in 1657 A.D. Shri.H.O. Shastri further argues that Appayya is said to have met Jagannātha in Kashi. Jagannātha who was a protégé of Shah Jahan, must have come to Kashi in or after 1658 A.D, when Aurangzeb put his father into prison. The point is really a complicated one. Even if we rely on all that H.O. Shastri has said, can we agree that there was a meeting of Puruṣottama with Appayya Dīkṣita? Puruṣottama was born in 1658 A.D. We should also bear in mind that according to H.O. Shastri he was born in 1668 A.D. Vrajarāya came to Surat in V.S. 1727. i.e. 1671 A.D. The meeting could have been possible only after that. Thus we shall have to assume that Dīkṣita came to Surat after 1671 A.D. Again according to the tradition, Puruṣottama was only seven when he discussed with Appayya and defeated him. Hence it must be in 1675 A.D, as the traditional account should tally with the generally accepted year of Puruṣottama's birth i.e V.S. 1724. It can not tally with the correct year i.e. V.S. 1714, because in that case Puruṣottama himself could not have been in Surat at the age of seven. This is too much to assume. The whole tradition of the Śāstrārtha between Puruṣottama and Appayya Dīkṣita seems to have arisen on the strength of Puruṣottama's composition of the Praṇastavāde, which was a 'slap' to the Śaivas and which was intended to be a rejoinder

to the Śivatattvaviveka of Appayya Dīkṣita. I am inclined to believe that the traditional record of Śāstrārtha between Puruṣottama and Dīkṣita does not appear to have any element of historical truth.

Another scholar with whom Puruṣottama is said to have direct contact according to the tradition, was Bhāskaraṛāya. Shri. H. O. Shastri says that some works of Bhāskaraṛāya are preserved in the Babu Dixit Jade Collection of Benaras. The said collection also contains some letters written by Bhāskaraṛāya. In these letters Bhāskara has passed caustic remarks against Puruṣottama. H. O. Shastri says that, it appears from this that Bhāskara, who was defeated in the Śāstrārtha by Puruṣottama, might have referred to him with Vengeance.¹⁵

I have gathered some information about Bhāskaraṛāya and his teachers Śivadatta Śukla from various sources.¹⁶

15. Avatāreavadāvalī. Hindi. Intro. p. 9.

16. Sources: (i) Bhavānī no Vād alias Bahucarakhyāti. Ed. M. T. Jarmanvela.

(ii) Pūrvamīmāṃsā: Ganganath Jha. with a critical bibliography by Dr. Umesh Mishra.

(iii) Lalitāsahasranāma with Saubhāgyabhāskara. Ed. V. L. S. Panshiker.

(iv) Sarvajanika—M. T. B. College, and Sarvajanik Law College Magazine. October, 1941. pp. 104-107.

Śivadatta Śukla belong^{ed} to Surat and stayed in Gujjar Falia, Haripura, Surat, where even today there is a street bearing the name of Vedabhāi Śukla, as Śīvadatta was popularly known.

Śivadatta's father was Mahādeva and his mother was Gaṅgā.

They were Audicya Brahmins and were deeply devoted to God Śiva. They had however no son. Once God Śiva appeared in their dream and asked them to go to Somnath, if they wanted a son.

They went on a pilgrimage to Somnath and pleased God Śiva and Goddess Pārvatī, who blessed them with a son. The couple then returned to Surat. A son was born to them on account of this blessing. He was named Śiva Datta or Śīvanārāyaṇa. When

he was five, his Upanayana ceremony was performed and he married at the age of twelve. At the age of sixteen, he finished his study of the Vedic lore and mastered Sanskrit and Persian. He began teaching students even^{at} that young age.

Once while Śiva-Datta was teaching students, a Yogin belonging to the Tripurā Sampradāya of the Nātha Pantha came to his place. On seeing him Śivadatta could understand that the guest was a Siddha Yogin. He served him as his Guru for a fairly long time. When the Guru was pleased, he bestowed upon him the Pūrṇābhīṣeka and Mahāsāmrajya Dīkṣā, which is

considered to be the highest honour in the Nātha Pantha. After attaining to this status, Sivadatta was named Svāmi Prakāśānandanātha. He soon became well known in the whole of India and was honoured by all. His preceptor then went away, when he found that his work was finished.

So many miracles are recorded round the name of Vedabhāi. In the beginning of the sixteenth century, someone sent two Bunyan trees and one Palm-tree flying in the sky. Prakāśānandanātha got them down with the help of Bālā Tripurā-sundarī. One Bunyan tree came down at Haripura, Sivadatta placed there the Yantra of Bahucarājī for its protection. That is known by the name of Bhavānī Vad. The other tree came down at Begumpura and was known as Mumbai Vad. The Palm-tree got down at Navsari Bazar near Dhed Talavdi. Ksetrapāla Bhairava was established there for its protection.

Vedabhāi used to go to the river Tapti every day at dawn for taking his bath. It is said that the Bangi was calling out for prayer every day at that time. Vedabhāi used to hear it and every time he said that it was wrong. The Muslims who heard this became very angry and complained to the Suba. The next day the Suba himself came there at

dawn and as Vedabhāi was going away after passing his usual remark, he was presented before the Suba, who demanded an explanation from him. Vedabhāi said that it was useless to shout when in fact it was necessary to call the devotees of Allah together together for prayer. The call should be such that a sucking child, a grazing calf, a grinding woman and even the flowing water would leave their respective activity on hearing it. When Vedabhāi was asked to prove his statement, he spoke out the Sūktas of Atharvaveda so loudly and seriously in the presence of a sucking child, a grazing calf, and a grinding woman, that all of them left their work and even the water of the Tapti ceased to flow for a while and meditated upon God with complete concentration. Vedabhāi was thereupon released and he went home. He became very famous on account of this incident. The jealousy of other Brahmins however led ~~him~~ them to complain to the Suba that as Vedabhāi was following the Kaulamārga, he used wine and such other things. The Suba thereupon went to Bhavānī Vād personally on an elephant with his large retinue. Vedabhāi came to know of this and asked one of his disciples to place a blade of Darbhā-grass on the road. The elephant of the Suba and the horses of his servants could not cross over this blade

and proceed further, in spite of all their attempts to do so. The Suba then sent for Vedabhāi, who sent a reply that as it was the place of Mother Goddess, one could come there only on foot. The Suba thereupon went on foot to the temple and asked Vedabhāi to show him the contents of the pots, which were kept there. Vedabhāi showed him the pots in which there were only roses, and rose-water. The Suba was pleased at this, gave him a valuable shawl and left. Vedabhāi could not accept the Shawl, which was given by a non-hindu. He therefore threw it away in the fire-alter. This was reported ^{to} the Suba, who again visited the temple and demanded the Shawl. Vedabhāi took out some shawls from the alter and asked the Suba to find out his own. The Suba was thus convinced of and awed by the superhuman powers of Vedabhāi, and bowed to him with respect. He requested Vedabhāi to ask ~~ed~~ for whatever he wished. Vedabhāi just said that the Suba should arrange for the protection of the temple. The Suba granted the wish and left.

Another miracle, said to have been worked out by Vedabhāi is regarding the drawing of boundary line of the crematory at Ashvinikumar. At that time people were very much afraid of ghosts and evil spirits, which haunted in the dark. There were some communities in which they observed a convention

of carrying a dead body to the crematory within a short time after death. It was again very dangerous to go to Ashvinikumar at night. Once a brahmin belonging to the community of Vedabhāi, died at night. Vedabhāi also went with the corpse. In the way to the crematory, the corpse was carried away invisibly by ghosts. Vedabhāi, with his spiritual power could know that the body was in the possession of ghosts, and he took its possession from them. The Brahmins then requested Vedabhāi to find out a remedy for this. Vedabhāi then fixed nails on the ground at various places and thus marked the boundaries, which the ghosts and evil spirits could not transgress.

His meeting with Bhāskaraṛāya is also said to have contained some miracle. Bhāskara was a very great scholar, who wished to enter into Śāstrārtha with the Pandits of Surat. They however directed him to go to Vedabhāi. When Bhāskara went to Haripura, Goddess Tripurāsundarī was playing outside the house of Vedabhāi. She told Bhāskara that as Vedabhāi was busy with Pūjā, he would better ~~talk~~ talk with the cow which was grazing there. That cow talked with him in Sanskrit. Bhāskara was so much awe-inspired at this that he bowed down to Vedabhāi when he met him and became his

disciple. Śivadatta Śukla then taught him for some time and gave him the Pūrṇābhiseka-Mahāsāmrajya-pada, ^{naming} ~~naming~~ him Bhā^{sa}ṣrenandanātha.

Bhāskararāya was the second son of Gambhīrarāya and Konāmbikā. He was born in Bhāgānagari (Sangli?) and went to Kashi with his father. He studied the 18 lores under Nṛsimhādhvarin and Tarkaśāstra under Gaṅgādhara Vājapeyin. His first wife was Ānandīdevī and his second wife was named Pārvatīdevī, who was a daughter of the brother of the Ācārya of Madhva's school. He was ³very great scholar and defeated the Ācāryas of all the schools. He wrote so many works, like Saubhāgyabhāskara, Setubandha, Vēdakaut²²āhala, Var^{ra}ṣyārāhasya, etc.

Some miracles are recorded even for Bhāskararāya. In the Saubhāgyabhāskara he has written about 64 crores of Yoginīs. Some Pandits from Benares objected to this by saying that the Yoginīs are 64 and not 64 crores. They went on discussing it with Bhāskararāya for three days, when sage Kumkumānanda finally applied the water of the holy river Gaṅgā in the eyes of the Pandits. They could then see Mother-Goddess discussing with them. They then left the discussion. It is said that he was doing the Mahāśoḍhā Nyāsa. One who

performs this cannot bow down to anyone except his teacher and istadevatā. This being the case, Bhāskara generally did not go out of his house. Once however the Ācārya of Śaṅkara's mutth came to Benaras and all the Brahmins went to salute him. Bhāskara did not go there but he was called by the Ācārya. He went there but did not salute him. The Ācārya said that the Brahmins who were householders generally paid respects to the Ascetics and it therefore did not behove him not to pay his respects. Bhāskara explained to him his position but the Ācārya wanted a proof. Bhāskara then put his Danda, Kamandalu and Pādukā before him and bowed down to them. Immediately all of them were rendered to pieces and were scattered here and there.

V. L. Panshikar in his Sanskrit introduction to Lalitā-sahasranāma says that Bhāskara was a contemporary of Nārāyaṇa-Bhaṭṭa, Grand-father of Kamalākara Bhaṭṭa. Kamalākara finished his Kirṇayasindhu in V. S. 1668. Hence Bhāskara must have lived some about fifty years before it. Panshikar has however relied upon the tradition about the Vivāda between Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa and Bhāskararāya.¹⁷

17. Lalitā-sahasranāma with Saṅghāgyabhāskara. Sanskrit Intro.

Dr. Umesh Mishra in his Critical Bibliography, suffixed to 'Pūrvamīmāṃsā in its sources' by Dr. Ganganath Jha says that Bhāskaraśāstra lived in the first quarter of the 18th century. His commentary *Setubandha* on the *Nityaśodeśikā* ^ś *Śikārnava* Tantra was written in V.S. 1789, corresponding to 1732 A.D. His *Saubhāgyabhāskara* was written in V.S. 1785, corresponding to 1728 A.D.¹⁸ Now Bhāskara refers to Śivadatta Śukla in his *Saubhāgyabhāskara* in the first verse thus:

Yas ca Śrī Śivadatta-Śuklācāranaih Pūrnābhīkṣito bhavat.¹⁹

Hence he must have come to Surat before V.S. 1785. Puruṣottama came to Surat after V.S. 1727 and lived there for almost the whole of his life, except occasional travels. Hence the possibility of direct contact between Puruṣottama and Bhāskara and even Śivadatta Śukla can not be ruled out.

We have seen above what Shri. H. O. Shastri has to say regarding the *Sāstrārtha* between Puruṣottama and Bhāskara.

18. Cf. *Pūrvamīmāṃsā*; Critical Bibliography p. 65. Also see:

Modacchēyāmitāyām śaradi śaradrtav aśvine kālayukte,
Śukle saumye navanyām atanuta Lalit^{nāma}śāhasrabhāṣyam.

Saubhāgyabhāskara. concluding V. 1. p. 240.

19. *Saubhāgyabhāskara*. Intro. V. 1. p. 1.

The followers of Bhāskararāya say that Bhāskara defeated the Ācārya belonging to the Vallabha Sampradāya. In the Bhāskara-Vilāsa Kāvya of Jagannātha, printed in the beginning of the Lalitāsahasranāma, refer^{red} to above, there are two verses which are important for our purpose. They are:

- (1) Śivadatta Śuklacaranāsāditapūrṇābhiṣekasāmrājyah,
Gurjaradeśa Vidadhe jarjaradhairyam sa Vallabhācāryam. V.30.
- (2) Līlāmātreritayā nīlācalapūrvayā capetikayā,
Vimatādr̥tam prahastam vyatanistā^a vihastam abjanibha-
-hastah. V.43.

V.30 shows that Bhāskara defeated the Ācārya of the Vallabha Sampradāya, while V.43 shows that the Prahasta was rendered futile by Bhāskara. It is very likely that the second line of V.30 refers to Puruṣottama or Vrajarāya, and Prahasta in V.43 refers to Prahastavāda of Puruṣottama. It is likely that the words 'Nīlācalapūrvayā capetikayā' may be referring to his work, bearing the name Nīlācalacapetikā, which might have been written in reply to Prahastavāda of Puruṣottama. Together with the references to Puruṣottama, seen by H. O. Shastri in the letters written by Bhāskara, both these verses show that Bhāskara and Puruṣottama must have come in direct

contact with each other and their contact was very probably not a very cordial one. As regards the result of the Śaṣṭrārtha, one should not be surprised to find that the followers of both the scholars have claimed victory for their side.

(VIII).

Disciples of Puruṣottama.

As a Vaiṣṇava Ācārya, Puruṣottama naturally must have had a large following in Surat. Some of his pupils were well known scholars. Unfortunately we do not know much about all of them. One such pupil was Bhaṭṭa Tulajārām, who as his name indicates was a Gujarati. Tulajārām was a great Pandit himself. His Utsavanirṇaya, also known as Vratotsavanirṇaya is written in Vraj. It is a summary of the Utsavaprataṇa of Puruṣottama. Tulajārām compiled this work at the instance of Govindarāya. He refers in this work to Puruṣottama as his Guru, thus: 'Ata eva Utsavanirṇaye asmadgurucaraṇair uktaṃ.'²⁰ This is followed by a quotation: 'Pūrvavidhāprāsastyāt...etc.'²¹ This is found in the Utsavaprataṇa. It should be noted that

20.U.P. p.16.

21.U.P. p.112.

Utsavenirnaya as well as Utsavapratāna (this^{is} also named Utsavenirnaya) has been mentioned by MM. Dr. P. V. Kene in the list of works on Dharmaśāstra.²² The Śodāśagopikāsaṅkhyā-tātparyavarnana of Tulajārām² has been printed as an appendix by Telivala and Sankalia in the Subodhinī Daśamapūrvārdha-tāmasaphalaprakaraṇa, with the Lekha of Śrīvallabha. The work is incomplete, since the first two folios of the manuscript were lost. In the Colophon, Tulajārām² calls himself 'Śrī-Puruṣottamajīcaranāntevāsin'. The work tries to show some significance of the number 16 of the Gopikās, engaged in the Rāsa. Another work Viruddhādharmāśrayatvavivecana has been found in the manuscript form in the Library of Pandit Gattulalji in Bombay. The manuscript bears No. 168 and has 6 folios. In the beginning, the author refers to Puruṣottama as his Guru, 'Saputrān Śrīmadācāryān gurūn Śrīpuruṣottamān'. At the end he calls himself, 'ŚrīgosvāmīPuruṣottamāntevāsin'. The manuscript was copied in Śaka 1784. The said library also contains another manuscript of 12 folios. The work is Navaratnasamākhya of Tulajārām². The manuscript bears No. 59.

22. History of Dharmaśāstra. Vol. I. p. 522.

Another manuscript, No. 68, dated Śaka 1792, contains the work *Sarvātṛabhāvanirūpaṇa*. Though the colophon does not mention the name of the author, in the body of the text we have one sentence: "Evam samādhānam 'Na matam devadevasya' iti Siddhānta-
rahasyaṭīkāyām asmadgurucarapaśrīmatPuruṣottamaḥ svāmibhir
eva kṛtam". It is very likely that the author is Bhaṭṭa
Tulajārāma-

Shri. H. O. Shastri says that Venīdatta Vyāsa Tarkapañcāna Bhaṭṭācārya was once a scholarly pupil of Puruṣottama. This Venīdatta was a descendant of Mahīdhara, the famous commentator of the Śukla Yajurveda. He made a thorough study of the Mādhyandina branch of the Śukla Yajurveda, and became a great Pandit in sacerdotal work. He worked as an Adhvaryu in many soma-sacrifices. He stayed at Ghasitola in Kashi. He studied Grammar, Vedānta, and Mīmāṃsā from the Pañcadrāvida Brahmins. He was a great scholar of the Navya-nyāya, which he learned from the logicians of Bengal. He went to Bengal himself and got the title Tarkapañcāna Bhaṭṭācārya. He wrote many Vādagranthas and Kroḍapatras, mostly after a style of the Navya-nyāya. He was at first a devotee of Rādhākṛṣṇa, but after his contact with Puruṣottama, he was converted to the

Puṣṭimārga. It is also said that Venīdatta accompanied Puruṣottama in his tours. He stayed in Kāshi for a long time and wrote many letters to Puruṣottama. Some of them have been preserved in the Sarasvatī Bhavan, Benaras. In these letters Venīdatta used to address Puruṣottama thus: 'Śrījñānavatārāṇām GuruvaraśrīPuruṣottamagoṣvāmīṇām careṇeṣu Venīdattasya koṭiṣaḥ praṇatayah.' When Venīdatta's daughter married, Puruṣottama sent one person with a letter to the Vaiṣṇavas of Kāshi, stating that Venīdatta was a great scholar of the Saṃpradāya and therefore he should be helped by them. It appears from this that the relation between Puruṣottama and Venīdatta was very cordial.

According to Kalyāṇji Shastri, (as I am told by Prof. C. H. Bhatt) Gopālajī Sācorā was also a pupil of Puruṣottama. Some of his works are preserved in the manuscript library of Pandit Gattulalji in Bombay. One of them is Māyāvādamatakhandaṇa. The manuscript is numbered 160. The colophon runs: 'Goṣvāmī-ŚrīprebhuṣṇigoṣvāmīśrīVrajanāthajīmahārājaprasādena Ramanakadvīpasthena Sācorā Gopālajīhāmṇā...etc.' The manuscript is dated V.S. 1922 and belonged to Goṣvāmī Yadunātha. It has 33 folios. The work is written in prose, having the extent of

about 840 ślokaś. Another work Bhakti^ddrohimukhamardana is a fairly long work. The manuscript No. 161 has 101 folios and bears the date V.S. 1873. The colophon runs: 'Iti... Bhakti-drohimukhamardano... Śrī Śaṅkhoddhāra sthiteṇa Sācorājñātiya Gopārajñānā... kṛtaḥ'. Besides there is one more manuscript No. 172 of the same author. The work is Abaddhavādimukhabādhā. The extent is 12 folios. From all this we can say that Gopārajñā Sācorā belonged to Śaṅkhoddhāra and lived earlier than V.S. 1873. It is likely that he might have been a pupil of Puruṣottama but one can not be definite about this.

(IX).

Ending years.

We do not know when Puruṣottama died. We have noted above that Puruṣottama had two sons, but both of them died during his life time. Puruṣottama therefore gave his Sevā together with all his wealth to another Puruṣottama, son of Muralīdhara who was his nearest heir. This Puruṣottama was the great grandson of Vrajālaṅkāra, the fifth son of Bālakṛṣṇa, the third son of Viṭṭhaleśa. The document executed in this connection is given in appendix No. 3. According to this document, Puruṣottama, whilst in full health and of his own

free will gave to another Puruṣottama, son of Muralīdhara, all his property, being the idol of Kālakṛṣṇa, that of Vrajeśvara and another; also the Pādūkā and all the ornaments and utensils connected with the care and worship of these idols, with a house and other property situated at Surat. The document bears the date Thursday, tenth of the bright half of the Second Āṣāḍha, V.S. 1781, corresponding to 1725 A.D.

Some scholars are of the opinion that Puruṣottama did not live long after that. The document however cannot be taken as an evidence for drawing any conclusion that Puruṣottama died in or immediately after V.S. 1781. He might have lived long even after that. Some scholars like Lallubhai Pranvallabhdas and others are of the opinion that Puruṣottama lived for 45 years only. The said document is a proof against the said view, because in that case he would not have lived even upto V.S. 1781. Telivala says that while he saw the manuscript library of Pandit Gattulalji in Bombay, he found one manuscript dated V.S. 1810. The manuscript contains the Kārikās of the twelfth Skandha of the third chapter of Tattvadīpanībandha. On the manuscript is written: 'Puruṣottamānām.' Again the manuscript has marginal notes, containing explanations written in very

small handwriting. This was the practice followed by Purusottama. The manuscript thus belonged to Purusottama, who was therefore alive in V.S. 1810.

The tremendous work that Purusottama has done, would also require a long life. We may say that Purusottama died not earlier than V.S. 1810 corresponding to 1754 A.D. Thus he lived a fairly long life of about 96 years. We can not however be definite about this. It is really unfortunate that we do not know much more about the life of such a great scholar and author.